

House Bill 3426
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

SENATE VERSION

CONFERENCE

SECTION 1. Section 434.002(a), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) The Texas Veterans Commission is subject to Chapter 325 (Texas Sunset Act). Unless continued in existence as provided by that chapter, the commission is abolished September 1, 2013 [~~2007~~].

Same as House version.

SECTION 2. Section 434.003, Government Code, is amended by amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsection (e) to read as follows:

(a) The commission is composed of five members appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the senate. The governor shall make each appointment without regard to the race, color, disability [~~ereed~~], sex, religion, age, or national origin of the appointee.

(e) A person may not be a member of the commission if the person or the person's spouse:

(1) is employed by or participates in the management of a business entity or other organization, other than a veterans service organization, receiving money from the commission; or

(2) owns or controls, directly or indirectly, more than a 10 percent interest in a business entity or other organization receiving money from the commission.

Same as House version.

SECTION 3. Section 434.004, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 434.004. CONFLICT OF INTEREST. (a) In this

Same as House version.

House Bill 3426
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

SENATE VERSION

CONFERENCE

section, "Texas trade association" means a cooperative and voluntarily joined statewide association of business or professional competitors in this state designed to assist its members and its industry or profession in dealing with mutual business or professional problems and in promoting their common interest.

(b) A person may not be a commission employee employed in a "bona fide executive, administrative, or professional capacity," as that phrase is used for purposes of establishing an exemption to the overtime provisions of the federal Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. Section 201 et seq.), if:

(1) the person is an officer, employee, or paid consultant of a Texas or national veterans service organization or a Texas trade association in the field of labor, workforce development, or career schools and colleges; or

(2) the person's spouse is an officer, manager, or paid consultant of a Texas or national veterans service organization or a Texas trade association in the field of labor, workforce development, or career schools and colleges.

(c) A person may not serve as a member of the commission if:

(1) the person is an officer, employee, or paid consultant of a Texas trade association in the field of labor, workforce development, or career schools and colleges; or

(2) the person's spouse is an officer, manager, or paid consultant of a Texas trade association in the field of labor, workforce development, or career schools and

House Bill 3426
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

SENATE VERSION

CONFERENCE

colleges.

(d) A person required to register as a lobbyist under Chapter 305 because of activities on behalf of a veterans association may not serve as a member of or as general counsel to the commission.

SECTION 4. Section 434.005, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 434.005. REMOVAL. (a) It is a ground for removal from the commission if a member:

(1) does ~~did~~ not have at the time of taking office ~~when appointed~~, or does not maintain during the service on the commission, the qualifications required by Section 434.003 for appointment to the commission;

(2) violates a prohibition under Section 434.004; ~~or~~

(3) fails to attend at least half of the regularly scheduled commission meetings held in a calendar year, excluding meetings held while the person was not a member of the commission without an excuse approved by a majority vote of the commission; or

(4) cannot, because of illness or disability, discharge the member's duties for a substantial part of the member's term.

(b) The validity of an action of the commission is not affected by the fact that it is taken when a ground for removal of a commission member exists.

(c) If the executive director has knowledge that a potential ground for removal exists, the executive director shall notify the presiding officer of the

Same as House version.

House Bill 3426
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

commission of the potential ground. The presiding officer shall then notify the governor and the attorney general that a potential ground for removal exists. If the potential ground for removal involves the presiding officer, the executive director shall notify the next highest ranking officer of the commission, who shall then notify the governor and the attorney general that a potential ground for removal exists.

SECTION 5. Section 434.006, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 434.006. OFFICERS; COMMISSION ACTIONS.

(a) The governor shall designate a member of the commission as the presiding officer of the commission to serve in that capacity at the pleasure of the governor.

(b) The commission annually shall elect from among its members an assistant presiding officer [~~a chairman, a vice chairman,~~] and a secretary. An officer shall serve until the officer's successor is appointed and qualified.

(c) [~~(b)~~] The commission shall meet at least once in each three-month period. No action may be taken by less than a majority of the commission.

SECTION 6. Subchapter A, Chapter 434, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 434.0061 to read as follows:

Sec. 434.0061. TRAINING. (a) A person who is appointed to and qualifies for office as a member of the

SENATE VERSION

Same as House version.

SECTION 6. Subchapter A, Chapter 434, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 434.0061 to read as follows:

Sec. 434.0061. TRAINING. (a) A person who is appointed to and qualifies for office as a member of the

CONFERENCE

House Bill 3426
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

commission may not vote, deliberate, or be counted as a member in attendance at a meeting of the commission until the person completes a training program that complies with **the** section.

(b) The training program must provide the person with information regarding:

(1) the legislation that created the commission;

(2) the programs, functions, rules, and budget of the commission;

(3) the results of the most recent formal audit of the commission;

(4) the requirements of laws relating to open meetings, public information, administrative procedure, and conflicts of interest; and

(5) any applicable ethics policies adopted by the commission or the Texas Ethics Commission.

(c) A person appointed to the commission is entitled to reimbursement, as provided by the General Appropriations Act, for the travel expenses incurred in attending the training program regardless of whether the attendance at the program occurs before or after the person qualifies for office.

SECTION 7. Section 434.007, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 434.007. DUTIES. The commission shall:

(1) compile federal, state, and local laws enacted to benefit members of the armed forces, veterans, and their families and dependents;

SENATE VERSION

commission may not vote, deliberate, or be counted as a member in attendance at a meeting of the commission until the person completes a training program that complies with **this** section.

(b) The training program must provide the person with information regarding:

(1) the legislation that created the commission;

(2) the programs, functions, rules, and budget of the commission;

(3) the results of the most recent formal audit of the commission;

(4) the requirements of laws relating to open meetings, public information, administrative procedure, and conflicts of interest; and

(5) any applicable ethics policies adopted by the commission or the Texas Ethics Commission.

(c) A person appointed to the commission is entitled to reimbursement, as provided by the General Appropriations Act, for the travel expenses incurred in attending the training program regardless of whether the attendance at the program occurs before or after the person qualifies for office.

No equivalent provision.

CONFERENCE

House Bill 3426
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

SENATE VERSION

CONFERENCE

- (2) collect information relating to:
 - ~~(A) services and facilities available to veterans; and~~
 - ~~(B) the status and quality of health care in veteran facilities, other than veterans homes, operated in this state by this state, the federal government, or a private entity;~~
- (3) ~~not later than December 1 of each even-numbered year:~~
 - ~~(A) publish and make available to the public a report on the status and quality of health care in veteran facilities described by Subdivision (2)(B); and~~
 - ~~(B) submit the report to both houses of the legislature and the governor;~~
- (4) cooperate with veterans service agencies in the state;
- (5) [~~(4)~~] inform members and veterans of the armed forces, their families and dependents, and military and civilian authorities about the existence or availability of:
 - (A) educational training and retraining facilities;
 - (B) health, medical, rehabilitation, and housing services and facilities;
 - (C) employment and reemployment services;
 - (D) provisions of federal, state, and local law affording rights, privileges, and benefits to members and veterans of the armed forces and their families and dependents; and
 - (E) other similar, related, or appropriate matters;
- (6) [~~(5)~~] assist veterans and their families and dependents in presenting, proving, and establishing claims, privileges, rights, and benefits they may have under federal, state, or local law;

House Bill 3426
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

- (7) ~~[(6)]~~ cooperate with all government and private agencies securing services or benefits to veterans and their families and dependents;
- (8) ~~[(7)]~~ investigate, and if possible correct, abuses or exploitation of veterans or their families or dependents, and recommend necessary legislation for full correction;
- (9) ~~[(8)]~~ coordinate the services and activities of state departments and divisions having services and resources affecting veterans or their families or dependents; and
- (10) ~~[(9)]~~ provide training and certification of veterans county service officers and assistant veterans county service officers in accordance with Section 434.038.

SECTION 8. Subchapter A, Chapter 434, Government Code, is amended by adding Sections 434.0076 through 434.0078 to read as follows:

- Sec. 434.0076. RECORD OF COMPLAINTS. (a) The commission shall maintain a system to promptly and efficiently act on complaints filed with the commission. The commission shall maintain information about parties to the complaint, the subject matter of the complaint, a summary of the results of the review or investigation of the complaint, and its disposition.
- (b) The commission shall make information available describing its procedures for complaint investigation and resolution.
- (c) The commission shall periodically notify the complaint parties of the status of the complaint until final disposition.

SENATE VERSION

SECTION 7. Same as House version.

CONFERENCE

House Bill 3426
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

SENATE VERSION

CONFERENCE

Sec. 434.0077. NEGOTIATED RULEMAKING AND ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURES.

(a) The commission shall develop and implement a policy to encourage the use of:

(1) negotiated rulemaking procedures under Chapter 2008 for the adoption of commission rules; and

(2) appropriate alternative dispute resolution procedures under Chapter 2009 to assist in the resolution of internal and external disputes under the commission's jurisdiction.

(b) The commission's procedures relating to alternative dispute resolution shall conform, to the extent possible, to any model guidelines issued by the State Office of Administrative Hearings for the use of alternative dispute resolution by state agencies.

(c) The commission shall designate a trained person to:

(1) coordinate the implementation of the policy adopted under Subsection (a);

(2) serve as a resource for any training needed to implement the procedures for negotiated rulemaking or alternative dispute resolution; and

(3) collect data concerning the effectiveness of those procedures, as implemented by the commission.

Sec. 434.0078. CLAIMS ASSISTANCE SERVICES.

(a) The commission shall adopt procedures for administering claims assistance services under Section 434.007(5). The procedures shall include:

(1) criteria for determining when a veteran's initial claim is substantially complete and basic eligibility requirements are met as provided by federal law;

House Bill 3426
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

SENATE VERSION

CONFERENCE

(2) a process for expediting a claim based on hardship, including whether the veteran:

(A) is in immediate need;

(B) is terminally ill;

(C) has a verifiable financial hardship; or

(D) has a disability that presents an undue burden;

(3) a procedure for counseling veterans on the potential merits or drawbacks of pursuing a claim;

(4) a process to ensure adequate documentation and development of a claim or appeal, including early client involvement, collection of needed evidence and records, and analysis of actions necessary to pursue and support a claim or appeal;

(5) criteria for evaluating whether a decision of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs contains sufficient cause for filing an appeal;

(6) a requirement that a claims counselor report to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs if the counselor has direct knowledge that a claim contains false or deceptive information; and

(7) a procedure for prioritizing a claim, when appropriate, or providing an alternative source for obtaining claims assistance services when it is not appropriate to prioritize.

(b) The commission shall consult with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs in developing the procedures under Subsection (a) to:

(1) ensure the services provided by the commission do not unnecessarily duplicate services provided through the United States Department of Veterans Affairs;

House Bill 3426
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

(2) ensure that the procedures will provide for resolving disputes at the lowest level of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs benefit decision process;
(3) ensure that commission employees are not improperly involved in adjudicating claims; and
(4) establish broad areas of cooperation between the commission and the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to streamline and align the commission's service delivery with United States Department of Veterans Affairs processes, including:
(A) identifying processes to update changes to veterans' cases and power of attorney designation;
(B) cooperating to expedite hardship cases and appeals; and
(C) identifying opportunities for the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to provide the commission with necessary data to assist with tracking the progress and outcomes of claims.

SECTION 9. Subchapter A, Chapter 434, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 434.0091 to read as follows:

Sec. 434.0091. SEPARATION OF POLICYMAKING AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES. The commission shall develop and implement policies that clearly separate the policymaking responsibilities of the commission and the management responsibilities of the executive director and the staff of the commission.

SENATE VERSION

SECTION 8. Same as House version.

CONFERENCE

House Bill 3426
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

SECTION 10. Section 434.010, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 434.010. RULES. (a) The commission may adopt rules that it considers necessary for its administration.

(b) The commission shall adopt procedures for receiving input and recommendations from interested persons regarding the development of rules and policies.

SECTION 11. Subchapter A, Chapter 434, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 434.0101 to read as follows:

Sec. 434.0101. ADVISORY COMMITTEES. (a) In developing procedures under Section 434.010, the commission may establish and appoint members to an advisory committee to advise and make recommendations to the commission on programs, rules, and policies affecting the delivery of services to veterans.

(b) If the commission establishes an advisory committee under Subsection (a), the commission shall adopt rules regarding:

- (1) the purpose, role, and goals of the committee;
- (2) the size and quorum requirements of the committee;
- (3) the qualifications of the members and the criteria for selecting members;
- (4) the procedures for appointing members;
- (5) the terms of service of members;
- (6) the training requirements of members;
- (7) the implementation of a needs assessment process to regularly evaluate the continuing need for the committee;

SENATE VERSION

SECTION 9. Same as House version.

SECTION 10. Same as House version.

CONFERENCE

House Bill 3426
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

SENATE VERSION

CONFERENCE

and
(8) a requirement that the committee comply with Chapter 551.

SECTION 12. Subchapter A, Chapter 434, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 434.0151 to read as follows:

Sec. 434.0151. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION. The commission shall develop and implement policies that provide the public with a reasonable opportunity to appear before the commission and to speak on any issue under the jurisdiction of the commission.

SECTION 13. Section 434.038, Government Code, is amended by amending Subsections (a) and (d) and adding Subsections (a-1), (e), and (f) to read as follows:

(a) An officer shall, within the time after the date of the officer's appointment that the commission prescribes, complete a course of initial training provided by the Texas Veterans Commission. The commission shall issue the officer a certificate of training after completion of the initial training course. To maintain certification, the officer shall complete continuing training to the extent required by the commission [~~attend at least one commission training conference a year~~]. An officer must maintain certification to remain in office.

(a-1) The commission shall develop and implement methods for providing training to officers. The methods

SECTION 11. Same as House version.

SECTION 12. Same as House version.

House Bill 3426
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

SENATE VERSION

CONFERENCE

may include Internet-based seminars, participation through videoconference, cooperation with training provided by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, and other methods as appropriate.

(d) The commission shall develop standard course materials, training curriculum, and examinations to be used for county service officer certification and United States Department of Veterans Affairs accreditation. The members of the commission must approve the course materials, training curriculum, and examinations before the commission may distribute the materials and administer examinations.

(e) The commission shall:

(1) maintain course materials and examinations in a central location and provide county service offices and commission field staff with access to the course materials on the commission's Internet website;

(2) regularly update course materials, training curriculum, and examinations after consulting with:

(A) the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure the course materials, training curriculum, and examinations are accurate and meet applicable United States Department of Veterans Affairs requirements; and

(B) accredited county service officers to ensure the materials, training curriculum, and examinations include issues developing at the county level; and

(3) develop a training handbook containing instruction and case studies addressing:

(A) general assistance techniques, including how to provide general information regarding state and federal

House Bill 3426
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

SENATE VERSION

CONFERENCE

benefits and referrals for other services and to other agencies, and general information regarding state and federal benefits;

(B) basic counseling approaches for assisting veterans, their family members, and other eligible dependents filing benefit claims;

(C) basic information on United States Department of Veterans Affairs processes and procedures, including how to accurately complete claims and appeals forms and how to support claims;

(D) methods of collecting required documentation and developing claims and appeals;

(E) methods of documenting progress and updating a veteran's, a veteran's family member's, or another eligible dependent's case information;

(F) methods of assisting veterans, their family members, or other eligible dependents in pursuing appeals, including offering case knowledge in appeals hearings;
and

(G) methods of representing veterans, their family members, or other eligible dependents during appeals hearings.

(f) The commission may establish rules to carry out the purposes of this section, including rules regarding carryover of credit for extra course attendance from one year into subsequent years and the anniversary date by which the continuing certification requirement must be met.

House Bill 3426
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

SECTION 14. Subchapter B, Chapter 434, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 434.039 to read as follows:

Sec. 434.039. COORDINATION WITH COUNTY SERVICE OFFICERS AND COMMISSIONERS COURTS. The commission shall develop and adopt procedures to coordinate with county service officers and county commissioners courts to:

(1) identify the shared objectives of the commission, county service officers, and counties with a county service office in serving veterans;

(2) develop a plan for encouraging service officers to become accredited by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs;

(3) develop a procedure for consulting with counties to evaluate the state's overall approach to service delivery by county service officers and commission claims staff as part of the state's veterans assistance network;

(4) define the commission's responsibilities in overseeing claims and appeals prepared by county service officers for instances when the commission has been designated as a veteran's agent under a power of attorney;

(5) develop a process for collecting information regarding claims filed by county service officers for instances when the commission has been designated as a veteran's agent under a power of attorney, for providing technical assistance to county service officers, and for providing evaluative information, on request, to county judges or other local officials who supervise county

SENATE VERSION

SECTION 13. Same as House version.

CONFERENCE

House Bill 3426
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

SENATE VERSION

CONFERENCE

service officers;

(6) incorporate county service officers into United States Department of Veterans Affairs appeals hearings either to represent veterans or to appear as witnesses, as needed;

(7) explore opportunities for funding county service officer travel to participate in United States Department of Veterans Affairs appeals hearings; and

(8) develop procedures to regularly update county service officers on changes in United States Department of Veterans Affairs policies and procedures, and other information.

SECTION 15. Subchapter C, Chapter 434, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 434.107 to read as follows:

Sec. 434.107. USE OF TECHNOLOGY. The commission shall implement a policy requiring the commission to use appropriate technological solutions to improve the commission's ability to perform its functions. The policy must ensure that the public is able to interact with the commission on the Internet.

SECTION 16. Chapter 434, Government Code, is amended by adding Subchapter D to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER D. TEXAS HOMEFRONT HEROES PROGRAM

Sec. 434.151. TEXAS HOMEFRONT HEROES

SECTION 14. Same as House version.

No equivalent provision.

House Bill 3426
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

SENATE VERSION

CONFERENCE

PROGRAM. (a) The Texas Homefront Heroes program is a program of the commission and is established to provide temporary financial assistance and other services to the family members of personnel on active duty with the army, navy, air force, coast guard, or marine corps of the United States or an auxiliary service or reserve unit of one of those branches of the armed forces, or the state military forces, as defined by Section 431.001.

(b) The Texas Veterans Commission, in consultation with the advisory committee established under Section 434.153, shall adopt rules as necessary to implement the program.

Sec. 434.152. HOMEFRONT HEROES ACCOUNT.

(a) The homefront heroes account is created in the general revenue fund.

(b) Money in the homefront heroes account may be appropriated only for the purposes of this subchapter.

(c) The Texas Veterans Commission may accept grants, gifts, or legislative appropriations from any public or private source for the purposes of the program and shall deposit any money received as a grant, gift, or appropriation to the credit of the homefront heroes account.

Sec. 434.153. ADVISORY COMMITTEE. (a) The Texas Veterans Commission shall establish a homefront heroes advisory committee to assist the commission in implementing the program created under this subchapter.

(b) The advisory committee is:

(1) composed of nine members who are family members of active duty military personnel; and

House Bill 3426
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

SENATE VERSION

CONFERENCE

(2) appointed by the Texas Veterans Commission.

(c) Members of the advisory committee serve without compensation but may be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses related to the performance of committee duties as provided by the General Appropriations Act.

(d) Reimbursement of expenses under Subsection (c) is subject to approval by the Texas Veterans Commission.

(e) The members of the advisory committee shall elect a presiding officer from among the members and shall adopt rules governing the operation of the committee.

(f) The advisory committee shall meet at the call of the presiding officer at least once each year.

(g) The committee shall make recommendations to the Texas Veterans Commission regarding:

(1) eligibility criteria for the Texas Homefront Heroes program;

(2) the application process for the program; and

(3) the services that should be provided under the program, including:

(A) temporary financial assistance for recurring monthly expenses;

(B) child care services;

(C) health care;

(D) education; and

(E) employment and job training.

(h) Chapter 2110 does not apply to the advisory committee.

House Bill 3426
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

SECTION 17. Chapter 164, Natural Resources Code, is amended by adding Section 164.0052 to read as follows:
Sec. 164.0052. COLLECTING INFORMATION; REPORT. (a) The board shall collect information relating to the status and quality of health care provided to veterans in this state through all veterans homes operated by the state or by a private entity under contract with the state to provide the care.
(b) Not later than December 1 of each even-numbered year, the board shall publish a report on the status and quality of health care provided through veterans homes to veterans in this state based on the information collected under Subsection (a). The board shall submit the report to both houses of the legislature and the governor.

SECTION 18. (a) The Texas Veterans Commission may conduct a study on male and female veterans who return from the war in Afghanistan or Iraq to determine what services are necessary to assist the veterans in their return from the war.
(b) The commission is encouraged to ensure that the diversity and contributions of all veterans of Texas are well-documented.

SECTION 19. The change in law made by Section 434.0061, Government Code, as added by this Act, regarding training for members of the Texas Veterans

SENATE VERSION

No equivalent provision.

No equivalent provision.

SECTION 15. Same as House version.

CONFERENCE

House Bill 3426
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

Commission does not affect the entitlement of a member serving on the commission immediately before September 1, 2007, to continue to serve and function as a member of the commission for the remainder of the member's term. The change in law described by Section 434.0061 applies only to a member appointed or reappointed on or after September 1, 2007.

SECTION 20. Not later than March 1, 2008, the Texas Veterans Commission shall comply with Sections 434.0076, 434.0078, 434.0091, 434.010(b), 434.0151, 434.038(a-1) and (e), 434.039, and 434.107, Government Code, as added by this Act, and with Section 434.038(d), Government Code, as amended by this Act.

SECTION 21. The Texas Veterans Commission shall:

- (1) comply with and implement any nonstatutory recommendations regarding the Texas Veterans Commission adopted by the Sunset Advisory Commission as a result of its review of the veterans commission; and
- (2) report to the Sunset Advisory Commission the information that the sunset commission requires regarding the Texas Veterans Commission's implementation of the sunset commission's nonstatutory recommendations not later than November 1, 2008.

SENATE VERSION

SECTION 16. Same as House version.

SECTION 17. Same as House version.

CONFERENCE

House Bill 3426
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

SECTION 22. (a) The changes in law made by this Act in the prohibitions or qualifications applying to a member of the Texas Veterans Commission do not affect the entitlement of a member serving on the Texas Veterans Commission immediately before September 1, 2007, to continue to serve and function as a member of the Texas Veterans Commission for the remainder of the member's term. Those changes in law apply only to a member appointed on or after September 1, 2007.

(b) Section 434.0076, Government Code, as added by this Act, relating to complaints filed with the Texas Veterans Commission applies only to a complaint filed on or after September 1, 2007. A complaint filed with the commission before September 1, 2007, is governed by the law as it existed immediately before that date, and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

SECTION 23. This Act takes effect September 1, 2007.

SENATE VERSION

SECTION 18. Same as House version.

SECTION 19. Same as House version.

CONFERENCE